# SUMMARY

The entire fifth issue „Ethos" takes up the question of Life. It is connected, among others, with the twentieth anniversary of the publication of Paul VI's Encyclical *Humanae vitae* which still remains the focus of discussions. However, the most important reason why the question of life has been presented in this issue is the situation of the present world in which life on Earth has been and continues to be threatened from various quarters. It concerns life in the broadest, ecological sense as well as human life which possesses the unique value through its relation to God's act of creation. This concern is presented in the introductory chapter *From the Editors* as: „The historical task of mankind through ages is to harmonize adequately the cry for freedom with the right to live and the duty to defend it".

The main body of the present issue consists of a group of articles arranged thematically according to the principle of what is general to the particular. In this issue's *Papal page* contains a passage from John Paul II's speech of 1986 on the courage to defend the truth about life and the world by the defenders of life. It is followed by a section of articles entitled *Life as a Gift* which consider the phenomenon of human life in the most general and fundamental perspectives. Cardinal Ratzinger examines the interrelation of legal, moral and religious approaches to life. In Bp K. Majdański's contribution to this issue a vision of the struggle between the civilization of life and civilization of death taking place in the world today is presented. Father T. Styczeń SDS in a philosophical and theological analysis demonstrates that the obligation of man towards man and God–Creator is to live as a full person.

A next group of articles bears the title *Life in the Union of Marriage and Family* and aims at showing the value of new-born life and as a warning against contemporary political and medical dangers for the unborn. This section opens with statements by two prominent authorities in the area concerned with the defence of life: Mother Teresa and President Ronald Reagan. W. Półtawska and W. Fijałkowski, both known as activists in the Polish movement for the defence of life, write upon the ethos of physicians who are concerned with new-born life and are obliged to protect life according to the Hippocratic oath. T. Kukołowicz discusses from the educator's viewpoint the social crisis in today's marriages and family resulting in divorce, the use of contraceptives, the antinatal attitude and massive use of abortion. The introduction of the abortion law in Poland in 1956, its unclear genesis and arbitrary approval in the Seym, is dealt with in a legal essay by J. Łopuszański and in the passages from the Parliament discussion on the bill (compiled by W. Chudy).

The third section concerns a problem which has been much discussed lately in Poland and is entitles *Against Capital Punishment*. It opens with the well known protest by Albert Schweitzer against the negation of life in Western culture. Next come articles arguing against capital punishment written from the perspective of theology and ethics (A. Szostek MIC), theoretical philosophy (W. Chudy) and law sciences (A. Grześkowiak).

All the texts in this fifth issue of „Ethos" refer to the pro-life and anti-death proposition. The Editors point to three contributors of this issue who symbolize this idea through their life experiences. They are Bp K. Majdański, W. Półtawska and W. Fijałkowski who were all prisoners of German concentration camps and who are now prominent defenders of life both in Poland and abroad.

The remaining part of the fifth issue consists of regular standing sections of „Ethos" dedicated also to the question of life in the family, nation and society. In the section *Thinking*

*about the Fatherland...* Jerzy Bartmiński (a lingvist) analyses various semantic dimensions of the concept of Fatherland. *Reports* include accounts of symposia dedicated to: Polish society eight years after „Solidarity" (A. Bernatowicz, J. Pawlak), alcoholism in Poland (J. Szczot) and a multifaceted picture of the family today's world (K. Klauza). *Review and Notes* present current books dealing with practical aspects of the period of engagement, marriage and family (K. Klauza, M. Czachorowski, Fr B. Szpakowski, Fr W. Gubała) and the books exploring legal aspects of abortion (a polemical review by J. Mazurkiewicz). A film review is a new section in „Ethos". B. Mruklik discusses *A Short Film about Killing* directed by Krzysztof Kieślowski which won the European „Felix" in 1988.

In the section *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* U. Tochman writes on the responses of scientists, social workers and the Church against the increasing interference of technology (among others, FIVET, „death pill", embriological experiments) into human life.

*Bibliography* containing John Paul II's statements on the value of life (K. Klauza) and a letter to the Editors close the issue.

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